

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BMEP, NI

SUBJECT: AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION IN NIGERIA

REF: A. LAGOS 5376

B. LAGOS 7450

C. STATE 190742

1. EMBASSY REGRETS MARRISON KNUDSEN'S DECISION NOT TO PURSUE AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT, PARTICULARLY AS WE HAD REASON TO BELIEVE IT WAS HIGH ON LIST OF PREFERRED FIRMS (REF. A).

2. WE UNABLE SO FAR TO DETERMIN WHY 6-7 US FIRMS FAILED TO PREQUALIFY, AS ALLEGED, NOR DO WE HAVE DEFINITE INFORMATION ON WHICH FIRMS THEY ARE. RESPONSIBLE MOT OFFICIAL NOT WILLING TO COMMENT ON THIS POINT, AND IN FACT STRESSED THAT THIS AMOUNTED TO CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT MOT, FACED WITH LONG LIST OF APPLICANTS, SIMPLY CHOSE THE TEN TO FIFTEEN FIRMS MOST LIKELY IN ITS JUDGMENT TO DO BEST JOB WHICH WORKING IN HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH FMG. ONE RUMOR NOW IS THAT ONLY 7-8 FIRMS WERE ULTIMATELY INVITED TO BID. FURTHER SPECULATION WOULD BE IDLE, BUT IF ANY HARD INFORMATION DEVELOPS WE WILL PASS IT ON.

3. EMBOFF'S APPROACH TO DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION (O. OGUNBIYI) ON POSSIBILITY OF ADDING ANOTHER US FIM TO "SHORT LIST" MET WITH UNENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE. CONSIDERING LARGE NUMBER INTERESTED BIDDERS, MOT APPARENTLY HAS LITTLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INCENTIVE TO INCREASE SIZE OF LIST EVEN IN INTEREST OF

ACHIEVING BETTER INTERNATIONAL BALANCE. LATTER CONSIDERATION NOT IN ANY CASE A FACTOR IN CHOOSING SHORT LIST, ACCORDING TO OGUNBIYI. IT IS WORTH NOTING IN THIS REGARD THAT MOT OFFICIAL WHO ORIGINALLY LED US TO BELIEVE OPPOSITE MIGHT BE TRUE (F.M.C. OBI, TRANSPORT DEPPERMSEC - REF A) HAS MOVED TO NIGERIAN AIRWAYS AND IS NO LONGER DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN AIRPORT PROJECT.

4. WE DID LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW CONTRACTING LIKELY TO PROCEED (REF B), ALTHOUGH PROCEDURE APPARENTLY STILL NOT FIRM IN MINDS OF MOT OFFICIALS. COMPANY (OR COMPANIES) CHOSEN FROM "SHORT LIST" TO DOPAVEMENT WORK WILL PROBABLY BE DESIGNATED AS PRIME CONTRACTOR. PREFERENCE MAY THUS BE GIVEN TO FIRM ABLE TO UNDERTAKE BOTH PAVEMENTS AND BUILDINGS PORTION OF WORK. PRIME CONTRACTOR WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO CHOOSE SUB-CONTRACTORS FROM LIST OF MOT-APPROVED FIRMS (AT LEAST ONE US FIRM, GENERAL ELECTRIC, IR REPORTEDLY ONE OF THESE), BUT WILL PROBABLY BE GIVEN WIDE LATITUDE IN CHOOSING OWN PREFERRED SUBCONTRACTORS EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT ON LIST. COMMENT: IF PRIME CONTRACTOR IS NOT US FIRM, THIS COULD WORK TO DETRIMENT OF US SUBCONTRACTORS.
REINHARDT

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